1089

A DISCOURSE ON MODERATION.

BRITISH MUSEUM

MODERATION Explained and Recommended.

A

SERMON,

On PHILIP. iv. 5.

PREACHED before the SYNOD

OF

MERSE and TEVIOTDALE,

At KELSO, the 18th of April 1749.

By JAMES ALLAN, M.A. Minister at Eymouth.

The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.

Insani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,
Ultra quam satis est, virtutem si petat ipsam.

LONDON:
Printed for D. WILSON, in the Strand.
MDCCLXIV.

[Price One Shilling.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

PHILIP. iv. 5.

Let your MODERATION *be known unto all Men.*

THERE is no Duty more univerſally acknowledged than that of MODERATION; perhaps, none leſs regarded. This may ſuffice to juſtify the Choice of this Subject.

BUT 'tis likely it may be ſaid, why at this Time, and on this Occaſion? Are not the Duties of the paſtoral Care more ſuitable and neceſſary? And, in this cool and lukewarm Age, ought we not rather to be called on, to be Examples of unſhaken Conſtancy and Zeal?

NONE of theſe Objects ſhall be out of my View; but to ſucceed in every good Work, Moderation is abſolutely neceſſary: And I hope, we ſhall not only with more Succeſs,

but with greater Pleaſure and Comfort, diſcharge that high Truſt committed to us, if in every Part of our Conduct we pay a firm Regard to the approved Principles of Moderation.

THIS Apoſtle tells us, that he was *ſet for the defence of the goſpel.* To that End he inculcates the Duty of Moderation, of which he himſelf was ſo great an Example. He exhorts us to have our Moderation ſhining and conſpicuous, extenſive and univerſal. *Let your Moderation be known unto all men:* That is, Not only be poſſeſſed of Moderation, but give every Proof and Evidence of it. Not to a Few, to a ſmall Party; any private Faction or Cabal; but approve and demonſtrate it to the Senſe and Apprehenſion of all Mankind.

IN ſpeaking on this Subject, I will,

I. ENDEAVOUR to explain, what is meant by *Moderation.*

II. SHOW what is the Force and Extent of that Expreſſion, *known unto all men.*

III. How

III. How, or in what Way, our Moderation is thus *made known*.

IV. Lastly, Lay before you ſome of the Advantages of *Moderation*; with thoſe Motives that ought to excite us to the Practice of it.

I will, by Divine Grace, ſuggeſt a few Thoughts on each of theſe Heads; at leaſt ſo far as your Time and the preſent Occaſion will allow: Mindful of that high Regard I owe to You, My Reverend Fathers and Brethren, and knowing how unfit I am to ſpeak in your Preſence; to whom it better becomes me to give Ear, and at your Feet to receive Inſtruction.

I. The firſt Thing propoſed is, to endeavour to explain what is meant by Moderation.

The Original Word is frequently found in the New Teſtament, and is variouſly rendered. It is made Uſe of by this Apoſtle, in deſcribing the Character of a Biſhop; and

alſo in explaining the Duty of the People. In both Places it is oppoſed to the Character of a Brawler. Thus 1 *Tim.* iii. 3. *A Biſhop muſt be patient* or moderate; *not a brawler.* And *Tit.* iii. 2. *Put them in mind to be no brawlers, but gentle,* or moderate; *ſhewing all meekneſs unto all men.* By the Apoſtle *Peter* it is oppoſed to *frowardneſs,* 1 Ep. Chap. ii. and 18. *Servants be ſubject to your maſters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle* or moderate, *but alſo to the froward.*

HERE then we have a negative Deſcription of this Virtue of Moderation, in its being oppoſed to a contentious and quarrelſome Diſpoſition, or to whatever leads to needleſs Striſe and Animoſity; as alſo, to all Obliquity of Temper, crooked or perverſe Humour.

ITS poſitive Nature alſo appears, from the two laſt quoted Paſſages. The good and gentle, or moderate, are, as it were, the ſame Character, 1 *Pet.* ii. 18. And to Gentleneſs or Moderation, is immediately ſubjoined, *Shewing all meehneſs to all men,* Tit. iii. 2.

THIS

THIS Goodneſs*, to which Gentleneſs or Moderation is added, and from which they ſeem to flow, is the moſt amiable and divine Principle. 'Tis the Character of God; the Source, the End of all moral Excellence and Perfection.

NOW, when this Goodneſs, which in feeble Man is often diſproportioned to the Object, and which is alſo kindled into too ſtrong and paſſionate an Averſion to what has the Appearance of Ill; when this Goodneſs is tempered by Meekneſs, thence ariſes that amiable and becoming Virtue of Moderation.

HOW much this Virtue partakes of Meekneſs, may be inferred from their being joined together by the Apoſtle *Paul*, in his pathetic Addreſs to the Church of *Corinth*, 2 Cor. x. 1. *I beſeech you, by the meekneſs and gentleneſs* (or Moderation) *of Chriſt*, where they may be conſidered as having the ſame Meaning and Character; or together, as making up

* 1 PET. ii. 18.

that

that complicated and perfect Virtue, which was peculiar to the great Pattern and Example of all Righteouſneſs.

It may be alſo remarked, that the Word rendered in our Text Moderation, not only ſignifies an ardent Love and Benevolence tempered by Meekneſs, but that particular Form, and theſe Expreſſions of Goodneſs, that are moſt remote from Ruſticity, Rudeneſs, or Barbarity, and are known by the Names of Affability, Courteſy, Clemency: For ſuch appears to be the Meaning of the original Word rendered by the laſt of theſe Terms, in the Addreſs of the Orator *Tertullus*, *Acts* xxviv. 4. *I pray thee, that thou wouldſt hear us of thy* Clemency, *a few Words*.

So much may ſuffice to explain the Senſe of this Word as made uſe of in Scripture: Suffer me only to add, that the common Application of it amongſt the *Greek* Moraliſts, doth not differ from, but rather elucidates that Senſe in which it is taken in Scripture; as it is by them generally made Uſe of, to expreſs *that*

equity

equity, which tempers and reſtrains the ſeverity of juſtice.

THE Moderation then of which we ſpeak, is no other than that calm and gentle Goodneſs that is unruffled, unbiaſſed by any unfriendly Paſſion; and which, like the Balance of the divine Perfections, ſupported by Truth and Juſtice, inclines only to the Side of Benignity and Grace.

BUT, to prevent all Miſtake, and to give a clearer View of this Subject, I will conſider this Virtue of Moderation in theſe two Points of Light.

1*ſt*, As diſtinguiſhed from Lukewarmneſs or Indifference.

2*dly*, As oppoſed to fierce and intemperate Zeal.

I. I will conſider Moderation as diſtinguiſhed from Indifference.

THE

THE one of theſe is often miſtaken for the other, tho' no two Things can be more diſtinct. Thoſe who may be called *indifferent*, are no way intereſted in the Happineſs, or concerned for the Miſery of their Brethren: they have no Sympathy with them in Diſtreſs, no Joy or Congratulation in their Proſperity. Such are Strangers to all the ſweet and tender Charities, which are the Joy and Life of the human Heart.

VIEW a Perſon of this Character in Society. He is utterly regardleſs of the Intereſts of his Brethren, conſidered as Fellow-citizens, governed by the ſame Laws, Members of the ſame Common-wealth; or, as bound by the ſame Tyes of Religion, engaged in the ſame divine Worſhip, having the ſame great Hopes and Expectations. How horrid, how monſtrous a Character this! A State of improved Depravity, to which the moſt corrupt and vicious Nature doth not ſoon nor eaſily attain; nor in any other Way, than by a rigid Diſcipline and Practice of Diſaffection, in the almoſt utter Extinction of all that is benevolent

or

or ſociable in our Nature, laying aſide all the Tyes of a Community or Country; every Thing that is good in a Moral Senſe, or that can have the Name of *Holy*, *Venerable*, or *Divine*.

PERHAPS there is no Perſon ſo thoroughly vicious as the Character we have been deſcribing, or who has arrived at this Pitch of *callous* Indifference: But whoever has imbibed theſe Principles, and directs the Courſe of his Life by them, approaches to this unhappy and abandoned State. And, in Fact, have not Inſtances been ſeen of Men, who, in ſocial Life, have almoſt thrown off every benevolent and ſocial Tye? Some too have beheld their Country a Scene of Blood, in Appearance, utterly unaffected with its Calamities; nor have been ſo far intereſted in its Fate, as to think or declare in favour of either Side; giving no Teſt of their Love of a Public, at leaſt, no open Declaration of their Gratitude for all the Bleſſings enjoyed by a free People. Perhaps more abandoned than thoſe, who, from ſome blind but fatal Principles, have been the open

Traitors of their Country, and who boldly aimed at the utter Subverſion of its Liberty and Laws.

AND did we not ſee, in too many Inſtances, the ſame Inſenſibility and Indifference extend to our ſacred, as to our civil Concerns, while the like imminent Danger threatened both?

AND are there not ſtill ſome found amongſt us, who ſeem blind to the Immorality of this State of Mind? And who, in Pretext of Moderation, or to blot out the Remembrance of former raſh Declarations, perhaps the Language of Rebellion, now talk loudly of *Indifference* in all public Concerns, and give it the higheſt Encomium of Wiſdom and Virtue; as if there could be no public Virtue or Liberty, but in their partial View of it; or as if the Safety and Glory of all were beſt regained, or eſtabliſhed, by all profeſſing a Contempt of them.

THERE is nothing more abſurd than this, or more remote from true Moderation. Moderation

ration is indeed a Stranger to Strife and Contention; in ſo far only can it coincide with Indifference, which can contend for Nothing, but the ſingle and ſordid Ends of Self-love, and which penal Laws are more fit to curb and puniſh, than Moderation, or any Moral Rules, to govern and reſtrain. But Moderation is the Reverſe of Indifference, as it leads to all the Acts of Courteſy and obliging Behaviour. It ſuppoſes the Exerciſe of every ſocial Affection, with a lively Feeling of thoſe that are of a public Nature, the ſtricteſt and warmeſt Regards for a Community or Public, with thoſe Sentiments of a Deity and Love of Religion, which are the only ſure Foundation of public or private Virtue. So that Lukewarmneſs and Indifference are ſo far from being of the Nature, or the ſame with Moderation, that where theſe conſtitute a Character, there can be no Place for the Exerciſe of this Virtue.

THUS then it appears how diſtinct and remote Moderation is from Indifference. We are next to conſider it, as oppoſed to fierce and intemperate Zeal.

It doth not ſuppoſe, nor aim at the Deſtruction of all Zeal. It ſuppoſeth quite the contrary. For Moderation is the Guard of Zeal. And ſo far is it from hurting and deſtroying, that it will cheriſh and promote TRUE ZEAL: which is a noble and divine ENTHUSIASM; and tho' not ranked amongſt the Virtues (and is confined to none of them, excluſive of the reſt, is yet unqueſtionably that SPIRIT that ſets them all in Motion, keeps them in lively Exerciſe, and by which every Thing great and noble hath been atchieved. So is it with PATRIOTISM, or the Love of our Country (How peculiarly becoming the Sons of this happy Iſland!) So is it with FRIENDSHIP, the Love of a Family, with every grateful and pious Regard; which, without Zeal, are languid and inactive, and are no no more than the cold Seeds of Virtue, till awakened and enlivened by this animating Spirit. 'Tis this which becomes the ſtrongeſt Guard and Defence of a Nation, ſo ſoon as any Deſign is formed againſt its civil or religious Privileges, as we happily experienced in a late violent and unnatural Attack on both; and

with-

without *this*, perhaps all ſocial Virtue would degenerate, and be loſt in profeſſed and avowed Selfiſhneſs; the Purſuits of which, as having no Species or Pretext of Virtue, have never yet been allowed the Name of Zeal.

SHOULD this TRUE ZEAL be diſcouraged by Ignorance, ill-judged Policy, or baſer Arts, we ſhould not fail to ſee both public and private Virtue ſuffer. What Pity is it, if ſuch a Spirit ſhould, in any Inſtance, be checked or repreſſed! And, when by Induſtry and Art rendered fruitleſs, be dreſſed in the Guiſe of Folly, and expoſed to public Scorn and Ridicule. — But, however rewarded, it muſt be acknowledged, that there is nothing more noble, or more worthy to be admired and cultivated, than true Zeal; and it is unqueſtionably good, *to be zealouſly affected* always *in a good cauſe*.

BUT, on the other Hand, there is nothing more dangerous or fatal, than Zeal when wrong directed, or when it exceeds all juſt Bounds and Proportion; and is a ſtrong Inſtance of the Truth

Truth of the common Apothegm, *Corruptio optimi, peſſima.*

I need not detain You, FATHERS and BRETHREN, in deſcribing, or in giving you a Detail of the Follies and Outrages that have been committed thro' ignorant or ill-governed *Z*eal. They have been ſuch as are a Reproach to human Nature; and, perhaps, more and greater Barbarities have been committed, thro' this Principle, than have ever flowed from the worſt and moſt corrupt Paſſions in the Heart of Man.

To what Ridicule hath Zeal expoſed whole Communities, great and powerful Kingdoms? and of theſe, many Heroes of eminent and diſtinguiſhed Virtue.

How hath blind and intemperate Zeal ſteeled the Heart, ſuſpended, well nigh extinguiſhed all the Feelings of Humanity? and in Proportion as the Object of ſuch *Z*eal hath been great, the Effects of it have been deteſtable. Thus Religion ſtands in the firſt Rank; next our Country;

Country; and then Zeal for the ſmaller Societies, different Parties, Factions or Cabals in which we are intereſted.

Two Things, by the Way, may be remarked concerning Zeal. 1. Thoſe who are intoxicated with Zeal, are generally influenced by, or under the Government of others; to whom they are often in Hazard of becoming a Prey; whilſt, at the ſame Time, the Height of Zeal makes a Man in his own Eyes the firſt and greateſt, tho' in Truth he may be the leaſt and moſt inconſiderable of his Party. 2. We may alſo remark, that Zeal, tho' miſtaken in its Object or Exerciſe, is not the Vice of the moſt abandoned, but is often the Fault of thoſe who have moſt of Religion, Virtue and Public Spirit; and Men have been conquered by the deluſive Fire of falſe Zeal, who have nobly withſtood all other Attacks, and who could be deceived by no other falſe Form whatever.

Now, to this falſe and intemperate Zeal, Moderation is the moſt juſtly oppoſed. Whilſt

it

it ſuppoſeth the Exerciſe of every good Affection, it gives a Check to their Exceſs. Thus it giveth the faireſt Proſpect that our Zeal ſhall be right directed; and prevents the fatal Conſequences of its being wrong placed, or ignorantly applied. Moderation gives alſo juſt Bounds to our Zeal, when it hath the juſteſt and moſt commendable Object. For even here (as has been already hinted) Men are extremely apt to err, and not only to run into every Species of Madneſs and Folly, but in the Cauſe and Defence of Religion, to violate its moſt ſacred Laws: And by how much the Object is confeſſedly good, with ſo much the greater Force and Violence do they break through all the ſacred Tyes of Goodneſs, and trample on that which they would defend. The firſt Object of the Zeal of ſome, hath been utterly hurtful and deſtructive; and the exceſſive Zeal of others, even in a good Cauſe, hath not been leſs fatal.

THUS ſome have contended for the TRUE FAITH, till they have not only bound up all Freedom of Speech and Enquiry; but, if poſſible,

ſible, of Reaſon and Thought; have not only checked the Growth of Hereſy and Error, but, by Fire and Faggot, have thinned the Churches of God; and have impiouſly ſaid, It was impoſſible ſuch could be ſaved, whilſt yet they have acknowledged the Operation of Almighty Power, and the Freedom and Riches of divine Grace.—And if in any Inſtances, Religion, Liberty, the beſt Syſtem of Laws, or moſt perfect Form of Government, ſhould be unneceſſarily defended or eſtabliſhed, in Violation of all Law and Juſtice, and in the Inſult and Contempt of thoſe Principles, on which every happy Eſtabliſhment is founded, in *theſe* the Fury of Zeal would be manifeſt.

But directly oppoſed to all theſe Exceſſes, and the Cure and Remedy of them, is Moderation. It is the moſt remote from needleſs Strife and Contention; it tempers Paſſion with Meekneſs, and the Wildneſs of Enthuſiaſm by the Dictates of Reaſon. Moderation always leads to Gentleneſs and Courteſy, and checks every turbulent Emotion, by the ſoftening Voice and Language of Love. And if Law and im-

partial Juſtice are pleaded, and the Execution of them urged, it departs from the Letter of the one, and reſtrains the Severity of the other, by its wiſe and benevolent Deciſion. Moderation is that eminent Virtue, and of that peculiar Influence, that it unites the Love of Truth with Charity; the Love of our Country with the Love of every Individual in it; Courage with Juſtice and Generoſity; and the Love of Liberty with that of all Mankind. In fine; it directs and regulates our Zeal, happily tempers our generous Ardor, is directly oppoſed to, and prevents all the evil Conſequences of it.

II. I PROCEED now to ſhow what is the peculiar Import or Force of that Expreſſion, *Being known to all men.* It can never mean that *every perſon* muſt be acquainted with our Moderation, or with any Virtue of our Lives. Some Virtues, from their very Nature, ſhun the Light; and it reflects an exceeding Luſtre on all, when it appears we have been rouſed to their Exerciſe, not from the tinſel Pleaſure of Oſtentation or Love of Applauſe, but from the ſecret and inward Workings of a good Mind, the

the Divine Pleaſure of doing Good. Yet muſt Religion and Virtue be marked in the Lives of thoſe that purſue them. Eminent Virtue is like a ſtrong and rich City built on an Hill, which ceaſes not to yield a lovely Proſpect; whilſt it gives Protection to the neighbouring Plains. And there are ſome *virtues*, though flowing from the pureſt Principles, yet call upon us not to conceal their full and perfect Form, but to hold up their amiable and exemplary Beauty to the View of all. Such are Temperance and Juſtice; and ſuch is Moderation. And by how much the more difficult it is to diſcharge this Duty aright, and in Proportion to its Conſequence to the Public Weal, with ſo much the greater Care and Attention, ought we in our Practice to delineate this Virtue; that its true and juſt Limits may be underſtood, and the contrary Temper condemned and abhorred.

Now what hath been ſaid doth ſufficiently demonſtrate, that our Moderation ought to be conſpicuous and made *known to all*; and tho' not to all, in a literal Senſe, yet to as many as

the Nature of Things and our Circumſtances will allow. But the Queſtion ſtill remains, How, or when it is that our Moderation is thus known and acknowledged? I will therefore give you one ſure Mark or Teſt of this Diſplay of Moderation; ſuggeſting to you afterwards ſome Thoughts, that may tend more fully to illuſtrate this Subject.

Our Moderation then has the Character required in our Text, and is *known to all men*; when it is known and acknowledged by thoſe of a different Party, of different Opinions and Principles from us. That this may be rightly underſtood, it will be neceſſary to make the following Obſervations.

First, It can be no good Reaſon that our Moderation is free from Exception, becauſe it is commended by thoſe of the ſame Opinion or Party with us. There are Inſtances of the moſt violent Counſels, and of the fierceſt Execution, that yet have been commended as gentle or moderate by the Generality of thoſe who have been joined together in the ſame Party

Party or Faction: Such Counſels and Meaſures as have raiſed the juſt Indignation of the impartial Obſerver.

HAVE we not ſometimes ſeen *faction* and *ſedition*, in the comely Habit of LIBERTY, with exceſſive Violence, and in deſpite of all Juſtice or Regard for the public Weal, attempting to pull down the Oppoſers of their Power, or Scourges of their Inſolence? Yet the Heads of ſuch dangerous Faction, and all the meaner Tools of their Ambition, will paſs for moderate in their own Cabals: and the moſt violent Attempts of Envy and Reſentment, are made to paſs under the Names of *neceſſary meaſures*, conducted with *temper* and *moderation*.

BUT what the deepeſt Wiſdom could not penetrate, or the juſteſt Prudence concealed, TIME hath brought to Light, and laid open to the View of all; and one momentuous Event, fatal indeed to many unhappy Sufferers, has now taught us to diſtinguiſh betwixt Faction and the ſacred Love of Liberty; and, I hope, will for ever guard the Lovers of our happy Conſti-

Conſtitution from promoting, by too haſty a Zeal, the dangerous Deſigns of our known Enemies.—But to look back from this Digreſſion. If Violence in the higher Miſdemeanors above-named, doth yet retain the Name and Character of Moderation amongſt thoſe of the Party intereſted, ſurely in the leſſer it will much more be preſerved and maintained; and it would be ſtill more juſtifiable (as in Fact it doth plainly exiſt) in the ſmaller Exceſſes of thoſe, who proſecute only ſuch Deſigns as are honourable and praiſe-worthy.

We may further obſerve, That tho' our Moderation be acknowledged by the Party oppoſite to us, it is never to be underſtood, as if they ſhould eſteem or approve of our Principles. But if in our Proſecution of them, no Miſanthropy or Hate of one of our Kind is obſerved; no Law, Civil, Moral, or Divine, is broken; no Faith violated, nor Juſtice in any Inſtance perverted: On the contrary, that the ſtricteſt Regard is paid to Truth, on the common and allowed Principles of Reaſon and Equity; that impartial Juſtice is preſerved ſacred and inviolate,

late, the Love and Charity of Chriſtians kept alive and cheriſhed; in theſe Circumſtances, whatever they may think of our Principles, however hate and deſpiſe our Opinions, if there is in them any remaining Ingenuity, it may be juſtly expected they will acknowledge our Moderation.

Lastly, on this Head, we may obſerve, That when our Moderation is the moſt ſincere and genuine, when it is clear and obvious to the Apprehenſion of all, we are not ſtill to expect that every one of a Party oppoſite to us, will commend or acknowledge it.

Sometimes this Juſtice cannot be obtained, even from a *friend*, or *intimate acquaintance*, from the different Tempers, Degrees of Capacity, or thoſe Prejudices, to which the beſt are liable; much more hardly or rarely will it be obtained from our Enemies; ſome of whom it may be expected are eaſily ſuſceptible of Reſentment, others of a fierce and cruel Temper, and inſtigated by hard-hearted and mercileſs Ambition (generally unfortunate to the unhappy

py Votary) will give no Quarter to thoſe that differ from them, or who, from the beſt Principles, oppoſe and counteract them. Such Diſpoſitions, and ſuch Conduct, will be found in ſome of all Parties and Denominations. But, from what we feel in ourſelves, Can we doubt there are Perſons of Probity amongſt thoſe, of Opinions the moſt contrary to ours, and who are animated with the ſame Zeal to defend and promote them? Will we aſſume to ourſelves a Papal Infallibility, whilſt we avowedly profeſs that there is no Opinion more groſs or abſurd, that it derives no Force or Strength from the Character or Advantages of any Perſon whatever who aſſumes it? Or are we ſo devoid of all common Senſe, as well as Charity, as to confine Candour and Ingenuity only to thoſe of our own Principles, and who with us agree in all Sentiments and Opinions?

We muſt admit then there is, or may be, Candour and Ingenuity amongſt thoſe who differ from and oppoſe us. To this we ſhould be able to appeal as the Teſt of our Moderation. And tho' it is hardly obtained, or from few,

yet

yet whenever we have this Acknowledgement, as being free from all Partiality in our Favours, it ſeems ſuch as may be ſafely depended upon as a proper Proof and Mark, That our Moderation is *known unto all Men.*

SUFFER me only to add, That this Proof or Teſt of Moderation, holds equally in religious, as in Matters of a civil Nature. Thoſe who can be deemed to have Charity and Moderation only in their own ſmall Society or Fellowſhip, it is to be feared they have both to learn. And, when this truly Chriſtian Temper is baniſhed, the next Step, from the Pride, Ignorance, and Tyranny of Man, is Oppreſſion and Perſecution: And if Fire cannot be brought down from Heaven, which is graciouſly withheld, it is yet kindled on Earth, and the good Hand of God only ſets Bounds to its unnatural Ravage. But amongſt all Sects and Parties ſome may be found, capable of diſcerning, and diſpoſed to applaud the Virtue of Moderation, even in their Oppoſers. And it is to be ſuſpected, this Virtue in us, is not without ſome foul

Blemiſh or Imperfection, when we cannot ſubmit it to this Trial.

I WILL now add a few Queſtions, which if truly and happily anſwered, will evince the Truth of our Moderation, and by which it muſt be known and acknowledged by all.

Is our Temper and Diſpoſition, are our Principles and Practice, in all Matters of Controverſy, even thoſe that are the moſt intereſting, ſuch as will bear the View of cool Thought and calm Reflection? Will they bear the ſharp-ſighted View and Search of an Enemy? Or, muſt our Conduct be gloſſed over by a Friend? A partial Friend! who perhaps has partook with us in the ſame Exceſs.

WILL it bear the ſedate Review of an impartial On-looker? perhaps, in ſome Corner remote from us, where they have not been agitated or inflamed by the ſame Paſſions? Or, in ſome diſtant State or Commonwealth, with us zealous Friends of Liberty and Religion? Or

cut off from us, not by Diſtance of Place only, but by Centuries of Years?

COULD we not appeal our Moderation, to the Judgment of the *Sages* of Antiquity, even amongſt the Heathen Nations? To a *Socrates* or *Plato*, a *Cicero* or *Marcus Antoninus*? Venerable Names! Teachers and Examples of almoſt Chriſtian Virtue!

BUT, if we dare not appeal to them, how ſhould our Conduct ſtand the View of the Prophets and Teachers ſent by God to his Church? or how quadrate with their Example? In theſe Inſtances, unqueſtionably approved of in Scripture, or where they may be looked upon as proper Patterns for Mankind: For what was done by them in an extraordinary Way, as having a ſpecial Power and Authority to inflict a particular Puniſhment or Judgment, is by no Means to be drawn into Example by us, who have no Pretence of Miracles, nor any immediate Commiſſion from God.

How will it bear the Trial of what is of all moſt perfect, the Rule of God's Word, dictated by his unerring Spirit, with that living Law and Rule of all Goodneſs and Excellence, in the Example of the Son of God, by whoſe Meekneſs and Moderation, we are the more earneſtly entreated and beſought. Have we been directed by the One, influenced by the amiable and conſtraining View of the Other? And,

Laſtly, HAS our Moderation, in all Inſtances, been ſo conſpicuous, according to our Sphere of acting, and Figure in Life, as that it muſt be acknowledged by every Spectator of it? That it hath been remote from Indifference, oppoſed to intemperate Zeal: That our Warmth and Ardor were not kindled by Views of Intereſt or Revenge; nor our Moderation only a baſe fawning, and bowing down to the abſurd Principles, or baſer Paſſions of thoſe of whom we cannot approve; yet, perhaps, ſervilely tempted to court them, from the Love of their vain and hollow Applauſe. If, I ſay, we can give each of us, for ourſelves, a happy

Solution

Solution to theſe Queſtions on the moral Side; if we are able, with Freedom and Uprightneſs, to make ſuch Appeals, to ſuch great and divine Rules, ſuch high and perfect Examples; if our Conduct hath been withal ſo clear, as to be liable to no Doubt, without partaking of any ſelfiſh, vain, or evil Principle, more than human Frailty, with all Care and Attention, and with ſuch Aids as are promiſed to us, permits; then, and in that Caſe, we have given full Proof of our Moderation; and in the true Force and Spirit of the Apoſtolic Precept, we have made it *known to all men.* And as far as we ſhall act by theſe Rules, and according to the right Solution of theſe Queſtions, our Moderation ſhall alſo be made known, and conſpicuous, in every Part of our future Conduct, in the remaining Period of our Lives.

III. It remains now to ſhow how, or in what Way, our *Moderation* is rendered conſpicuous, and made *known to all.*

Now this will appear, both by our *Converſation*, and by our *Practice.*

By

By the *1ſt*, I underſtand, our ordinary Diſcourſe, and the common Expreſſions and Declarations of Sentiments by Speech to one another.

And indeed it is neceſſary we make known our Moderation in this Way; becauſe our Diſcourſe and Converſation, being conſidered as the Language of our Hearts, cannot fail to be of Influence. Is it not in this Way, that the Seeds of Error and Infidelity have been ſown; the true Foundation of Virtue ſhaken, and its Obligations looſened? Hath not the Fire of Sedition been often this Way kindled, and its baneful Influence ſpread and propagated? (The Enemies of Peace and Virtue have well underſtood this.) And who knows not the Force of Liberty and Religion? the divine Sentiments of both, improved and diffuſed by the Voice of ſocial Diſcourſe and Converſation? Nor is the Language of Moderation of leſs Uſe, to ſtop the Torrent of Enthuſiaſm, to check the dangerous Exceſs of our heated Paſſions, and to reſtrain them within juſt Bounds.

This

This Moderation in our Speech will appear, in gently touching, or waving thoſe Subjects, that are apt to incenſe and provoke; *ſave* when our ſtrict Duty calls upon us to aſſert or vindicate our upright Sentiments, and the juſt and ſacred Principles of Religion and Government. I ſay, with this ſingle Exception, Moderation will ſhew itſelf, in waving thoſe Subjects or Facts that are apt to occaſion Heat and Warmth. For theſe unhappy Colliſions never make one Convert; nor have any other Effect, than to divide and diſunite; often looſening the pleaſing Ties of former Friendſhip, or of ſweet ſocial Acquaintance: And from a Mixture of Pride and Reſentment, Paſſions but too natural, and which are greatly inflamed by Conteſt, the immoderate Diſputants take Leave of one another, more rivetted in all the Abſurdities of their Opinions, than they were before.

And here it is to be remembered, that the Ties of Love and ſocial Obligation are, of all Things, the moſt plain; nor in any Inſtance can they be diſſolved, but by ſomewhat ſtronger, and of that preciſe Kind and moral Nature;

Nature; and though thoſe Things about which we may diſpute, are often dubious (ſometimes beyond the Deciſion of Reaſon, the moſt acute and beſt enlightened); yet we can never be in any Uncertainty, at what Time, or in what Inſtances, we are called upon to every Act and Expreſſion of Humanity and Love.

HENCE it is, that the Perſon of Moderation, whilſt he is the moſt firmly eſtabliſhed, and ready to defend his own good Principles, is yet willing to make Allowance for the different Sentiments and Opinions of his Brethren; will behave to them with that Deference, which becomes us to ſhew to thoſe who have the ſame good Nature, the ſame good Affections, and the ſame or greater Advantages and Opportunities than we enjoy; and with that Reſpect, Courteſy and Affability, which it becomes every Man to ſhow to Another.

OUR Moderation will appear in our *Life* and *Practice*, by ſupporting with all our Power and Influence, whatever Things are gentle and moderate: By oppoſing what is contrary:

And

And by calmly ſubmitting to, and improving to the Purpoſes of Moderation, what it might be out of our Power to prevent. As to the *Firſt*, The *Voice* of every Perſon, in this happy Iſland, is, in ſome Meaſure, heard and regarded. The Legiſlature is in the Hands of *many*. Nor are the Suffrages only pleaſed, but the Body of the People are alſo conſidered and regarded. When *theſe* Maxims have been condemned or deſpiſed, it hath proved deſtructive to every *violent* Adminiſtration; always inauſpicious, and ſometimes fatal to Tyranny in the higheſt Elevation; but ill and weakly defended by the Glitter of a Crown. On the contrary, when the Voice of the People is heard, and their Murmurs, meaning neither Sedition nor Rebellion, are gently calmed, and the Occaſions of them removed; but violently breaking out in either, reſtrained and puniſhed by the Hand of Juſtice, often ſtaid and with-held by Mercy's divine and powerful Energy; 'tis then we ſee a People happy, as at this Day.

In a Kingdom ſo conſtituted as this, the Influence of the ſmalleſt is of ſome Importance;

nor can it be doubted, but ſome Degree of Attention is given to us, who are cloathed with the ſacred Character of Miniſters of Chriſt, and Members of the eſtabliſhed Church of *Scotland*.

WHEREVER then our Influence can extend, it ought, and I hope always will be employed in promoting and advancing whatever is moderate, meek, gentle; never departing from that Equity which is blended with Compaſſion: And not only in our Converſation and Labours amongſt our People, but eſpecially in a judicative Capacity, (Members of a Court deriving its Authority from the Meek and Bleſſed Jeſus, the Head of his Church)—That we will in this Capacity exert ourſelves to the utmoſt; diſcountenancing every Meaſure that is violent; nor favouring Severity, except when urged to it by ſuch *Neceſſity*, as cannot, in Reaſon, and without departing from the ſacred Laws and Rules of God's Word, be reſiſted. That we will take Care, never wantonly to provoke or irritate; nor unwarily ſhut or keep out from our Society, *thoſe*, with whom, by the Bleſſing

ſing of God attending our Miniſtry, we may live in Chriſtian Unity here, and join with them in ſweet Strains of Harmony and Love, hereafter.

MODERATION ſometimes tends to *oppoſe*, but with Reluctance; for there is ſomething baneful in Oppoſition: and as it hath been often ſeen to flow from a bad Heart, and the worſt of Motives, it hath therefore, even when juſtly and honourably made, gained no Credit: Yet in Reaſon, it muſt be acknowledged to be noble and praiſe-worthy, honeſtly to oppoſe what has the Appearance of *Wrong*; to endeavour to detect Miſtake or Error, to foreſee and prevent, if poſſible, the Miſchiefs of every Torrent. For the Minds, even of good Men, are ſometimes agitated or *troubled*;—but we are not *now*, by a Miracle, to expect any healing Virtue from that *Commotion*. And it would indeed be a Miracle, to ſee healing and moderate Counſels prevail, where Heat and Ferment may be obſerved. If then, from an Overwarmth, the Symptoms of Violence and Seve-

rity are at any Time obſerved: If they threaten to break the Bounds of Religion, or make any Encroachment on Liberty, tho' on Pretence of guarding both: If eſpecially it ſhould be at a Time, when the rankled Minds of Men call for Relief, and deſire to have every Wound cloſed, and effectually cured; tired of the unnatural and exquiſite Pains, of Enmity, Contention and Hate: If at a Time when public Meaſures, and the moſt pacific Counſels, call upon us to lay aſide and forget our former Reſentments; it is then the Part of every moderate Man, more eſpecially the Miniſters of Chriſt, to check and cure theſe Symptoms, to withſtand and oppoſe their Violence.—Happy were it, if Men's Tempers, in good Inſtances, would change with Times. And ſurely when Wars entirely ceaſe, and public Meaſures breathe nothing but Peace and Moderation, the Minds of all Men ought to be formed to that Temper.

But, *Laſtly*, on this Head, Moderation is ſhewn in our Practice, when we gently ſubmit to, and ſupport public Meaſures and Counſels, which,

which, tho' not the *Beſt* that might have been taken, yet perhaps are the only Meaſures which, conſiſtently with the public Safety, can be followed or obſerved.

If they are only ſuch as are leſs wiſe, or leſs advantageous, this is unqueſtionably our Duty. It is a Shame for Men, to be always expoſing the weak or imperfect Conduct of their fellow Citizens or Rivals: And tho' this hath been deemed a Mark of Wiſdom, by the weak and undiſcerning Mob; yet it is in Truth no certain Inſtance of Superiority. Such Conduct is full of Danger: For what we decry, we will alſo endeavour to defeat: And from an utter Diſreſpect of Counſels may not only neglect doing that Good, which might be in our Power; but be led do that Hurt to our Neighbour, and Injury to the Public, which we ſhall never be able to retrieve or repair. If we could indeed ſuppoſe ſuch Things preſcribed by our Superiors, as are in all Reſpects evil, and which we could never follow, but at the Expence of Conſcience, Virtue, and Religion; in this Caſe,

no

no Doubt, we ſhould ceaſe to act, whatever Hardſhips this ſhould bring upon us. And we all know what is juſtifiable and our ſtrict Duty, in Caſes of the *laſt Extremity*.

But unqueſtionably there is much of Temper, and much of the Virtue of Moderation ſhown, in ſupporting and countenancing Meaſures, which, far from being the beſt in our Judgment, have been warmly oppoſed by us. This ought to influence and regulate the Conduct of every good Subject, more eſpecially, of every one cloathed with the Character of a Preacher of Christ: And in this All ought to agree, that, to the utmoſt of their Power, they may ſupport and advance, whatever tends to the public Peace and Tranquillity.

IV. The laſt Thing propoſed was, To mention ſome of the Advantages of *Moderation*, with thoſe Motives that ought to excite us to the Practice of it. Suffer me only to mention the ſeveral Topicks.

There

THERE is then nothing doth ſo fairly promiſe, or ſo fully aſſure us of Succeſs, as Moderation. It gives Juſtice, Force, and Weight to all Counſels; and generally prevents the Weakneſs and Imprudence of Conduct. Courteſy or Affability, which are the Attendants of Moderation, ſmoothe the Brow of Contradiction, and ſtifle Complaint; and that undiſguiſed Love and Gentleneſs, which are of its Nature, powerfully conciliate the Love and Reſpect of All.

THIS is viſible in every Inſtance of Moderation, and ſometimes hath had ſo ſtrong an Effect, as to bind up or weaken the Hands of Oppoſition; and, ſo ſoon as Victory hath declared, united the Conquered to the Victor's Intereſt.

MODERATION is always a lovely Object to the Mind. It needs not the *Eclat* of Victory and Succeſs. 'Tis amiable under every Hardſhip and Diſappointment, and, like the nobleſt of Virtues, ſhines with a peculiar Glory in Diſtreſs. There is in this Virtue what fits us for

for the Exerciſe of Patience; it is the very Temper of Reſignation; nor do we deem there can be true Fortitude, where the Foundation is not laid in Moderation.

LIKE thoſe excellent Virtues, it affords not only a lovely Proſpect, but gives alſo inward Peace and Quiet. It knows none of the bitter Stings of Violence and Outrage; and is happy in its own Conſciouſneſs.

MODERATION has the ſweet Eſteem of all good Men, with many grateful Returns from the Relief of ſuffering Virtue. It fails not of the Applauſe of God, and is aſcertained of his laſt Approbation and great Reward. Theſe are Advantages which can never be hoped for from the oppoſite Temper; which is ſubject to the blackeſt Miſery. They are indeed ſuch as cannot be fully deſcribed: For the Mind of Man cannot comprehend the Greatneſs of that Reward, which is graciouſly promiſed to us in *Chriſt Jeſus*.

WERE

WERE Motives here neceſſary to be recited, the Command of God, the Example of our Bleſſed Saviour, the *Genius* of the Goſpel, the Pattern of the Apoſtles, the Temper and Character of the firſt Chriſtians, and ſuch as were deemed worthy to ſeal their Faith with their Blood: All theſe ſurely plead ſtrongly with us: And the ſeaſonable and ſufficient Aids of God's Spirit give us the greateſt Encouragement to go on in the Exerciſe of this great Chriſtian Duty.

THE common Affections of Humanity call upon us to Moderation. The Wants and Neceſſities of our Brethren, Their preſent and Eternal Happineſs, Love of Unity and Concord, of ſweet Fellowſhip and Society with them, The Intereſt and Neceſſity of the Commonwealth, The Succeſs of the Goſpel, and the Enlargement, Beauty, and Proſperity of this Church, All unite in enforcing the Apoſtolick Precept, *Let your Moderation be known unto all Men.*

We particularly, who are cloathed with the ſacred Character of Miniſters of Christ, are chiefly called on to be Examples of Moderation. Does not our Duty bind us, the Command of God enjoin us, our diſtinguiſhed Station in Life call on us, to go before others in this and every other Duty of the Chriſtian Life? Love to the Souls of our People, the Deſire of doing Good, and promoting the Glory and Honour of our Lord and Maſter, ought to warm our Hearts, and ſtrengthen our Hands in the Exerciſe of this Grace, as well as in the Performance of every Part of that great Truſt which is committed to us.

Nor is *Moderation* to be deemed, only in general, the Mark of a good Man. It is the peculiar Duty and Character of a Miniſter of the Goſpel. This you may be fully ſatisfied of, from the Character given us of a Biſhop by the Apoſtle *Paul*, and thoſe Rules he lays down for our Conduct; and which I hope you will ſuffer me to lay before you in his own Words. Thus, 1 *Tim.* iii. 3. *A Biſhop*, or Miniſter, *muſt be no ſtriker, nor brawler, but patient*, or moderate,

moderate. 2 Tim. ii. 23. *But fooliſh and unlearned queſtions avoid, knowing that they do gender ſtrifes. And the ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing them that oppoſe themſelves, if peradventure God will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.* He appeals to his own Character, Chap. iii. 10. *But thou haſt fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpoſe, faith*; adding theſe eſſential Miniſterial Qualifications, *Long-ſuffering, Charity, Patience.*

AGAIN, Tit. i. 7. *A Biſhop ought not to be ſelf-willed, not ſoon angry—No ſtriker.* Theſe Words need no Comment; but by the Fulneſs, Strength, and frequent Reiteration of thoſe Qualifications, point out how eſſentially neceſſary, and how important they are in the Character of a Miniſter of Chriſt.

FORGIVE my adding theſe general Directions, in the Words of the ſame great Apoſtle, by which the Dignity and Uſefulneſs of our Character, as well as our Moderation, may be

known and acknowledged by *all men*. Let us then *not neglect the gift that was given us* (the ſpecial Office committed to us) *by prophecy* (agreeable to the Word of God) *with the laying on the hands of the presbytery*. Let us *meditate upon theſe things, giving ourſelves wholly to them, that our profiting may appear to all. Let us hold faſt the form of ſound words, which we have heard, in faith and in love which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

LET us abhor the Thoughts of *filthy lucre*, or ſordid Gain, not *entangling ourſelves with the affairs of this life, that we may pleaſe him who hath choſen us to be ſoldiers*, in a ſpiritual Warfare; whoſe Object, is not temporal Honours, or an earthly Crown; but the richer Diadem, and unfading Glory of an heavenly Kingdom. Let us moderately deſire Riches, though honeſtly obtained, and, *having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.*

LET Temperance be the univerſal Ornament of our Lives; *abſtaining from wine, wherein is exceſs*, nor making too high Approaches to it.

Let

Let us fly *every appearance of evil*, being not only good, but *of good report, walking circumſpectly to thoſe that are without.*

FINALLY, *Let us be ſtrong in the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhewing ourſelves approved unto God, workmen that need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* Let us *take heed to ourſelves, and to our doctrine, ſtedfaſtly continuing in them, for in doing this we ſhall both ſave ourſelves, and them that hear us.*

IT remains that I addreſs myſelf to you, my dear Brethren and fellow Chriſtians.

YOU are our Brethren, by all the Ties of Humanity and good Affection; you are much more our Brethren in Chriſt Jeſus.

YOU have with us, the ſame Faith, the ſame Hope, the ſame Baptiſm and Sacraments. We claim no Goſpel-Privilege above you, nor any Cup of Bleſſing ſeparate from you. We diſclaim all Dominion over your Faith; and deſire only to be Helpers of your Joy: *And this*

we

we do for the goſpel's ſake, and that we may be partakers thereof with you. We beſeech your Attendance on our Miniſtry, profitable to us and you, by your Love; and your fervent Prayers for us, that *the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified.*

It is our Duty and Office, and I hope our ſingle Aim, *to know nothing amongſt you, but* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified; to you who believe, the power and wiſdom of God*; Chriſt *in you, the hope of glory.*

He is the divine Light! the eternal Word, the Image of the inviſible God, *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon.* He is to us, our Head and Deliverer, the Captain of our Salvation, the Phyſician of our Souls, our Advocate and powerful Interceſſor with God. Friend, Friend at the coſtlieſt and deareſt Price! to the choſen Race of *Adam*; and Reſtorer to the Divine Favour: whence thoſe unexhauſted Bleſſings flow, which make *Earth* the Image of Heaven, and which fill *Eternity* with unſpeakable Joy.

As being then *ambaſſadors for* Chriſt, *as tho' God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in* Chriſt's *ſtead be ye reconciled unto God. Put on the Lord Jeſus.* Be adorned with the Graces of the Spirit, grow up in the Virtues of his Life.

We beſeech you, by the meekneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſt; if there be in Chriſt, any conſolation; if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies; fulfil ye our *joy; that ye be like-minded, having the ſame love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done thro' ſtrife, or vain glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves. Let this mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus,* Phil. ii. 1.

LET all the Virtues of the Life of JESUS be copied by us; nor let any of us fall behind in that of MODERATION; which is beautiful in Life, eſſentially neceſſary in Religion; which *theſe Times* call upon us to cultivate and improve; which the *Genius* of a mild Government invites; and which God, of his Grace, will not fail to reward.

FINIS.

BRITISH
4 OC 70
MUSEUM